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Summary of Congressional Comment Regarding  
Southeast Asia - 23 June 1964

Senator Wayne Morse continued his campaign against the Administration's policy in Viet Nam. He said that after listening to a briefing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee by the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, he was "... convinced that the greatest threat to the peace of the world is the United States" adding that if the United States continued to follow the course implied by that briefing, we would be "... headed straight for a major war in Asia...." When word of the resignation of Ambassador Lodge and the appointment of General Taylor was announced, Senator Morse again took the floor to describe General Taylor's appointment as "... a calamitous mistake on the part of the President of the United States." He said he would vote against the nomination when it came to the Foreign Relations Committee and to the floor of the Senate.

A speech by Senator Church marking the 20th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations touched off exchanges by other senators on the Viet Nam situation. Senator Church stressed the importance of the United Nations in international crises. Senator Fulbright said he doubted the practical application of Senator Church's view to the Southeast Asia situation at this time. He supported our present policy and the President's appointment of General Taylor as Ambassador. Senator Morse complimented Senator Church on his views on the United Nations but said he was sorry Senator Church marred his speech in his colloquy with Senator Fulbright. Senator Morse, therefore, disagreed with both Senator Church and Senator Fulbright on Viet Nam. Senator Humphrey complimented Senator Church on his United Nations speech and added that he, too, was pleased with the President's appointment of General Taylor. In response to critics of the appointment of military men to an ambassadorial position, Senator Humphrey cited the outstanding contribution in civilian positions made by Generals George Marshall, Bedell Smith and Omar Bradley. Senator Morse, getting the last word, stated that General Taylor was not even in the "class" of General Marshall or General Bradley. He described General Taylor as "one of the architects" of "McNamara's war in South Viet Nam."

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